

National Highways' bridge schemes shortlisted for South West engineering awards

The Institution of Civil Engineers has shortlisted the A38 Mowhay footbridge scheme Plymouth for the Sub £8 million category, while the 18-month refurbishment of the two M5 Junction 11 bridges has been nominated in the over £11 million category in its 2022 South West Civil Engineering Awards, as well as both being up for the People's Choice award,

Earlier this year National Highways and contractors South West Highways Ltd completed the £2.89 million project to upgrade the Mowhay footbridge, effectively joining up with a local cycle route around the city and also making it easier for wheelchair users and people with pushchairs to cross the A38.

The original bridge was not wide enough to safely accommodate both cyclists and walkers, and work started in June last year to modify both the bridge and ramps to enable it to link up with a recently completed footway/cycleway.

As well as the wider deck, the upgrade includes a more manageable gradient, new ramps, steps, fencing and guard rails, new lighting and a new surface water drainage system. By improving the connection between Honicknowle, Weston Mill and St Budeaux further recreational opportunities will be unlocked in Plymouth and commuters can now actively choose an alternative sustainable method of transport.

The refurbishment scheme of the M5 bridges supporting the junction 11 Golden Valley Gyratory was a major undertaking for National Highways and MJ Church and involved complex repairs and deep excavations to the two main supporting bridges between Gloucester and Cheltenham.

The scale of the excavation work during the M5 bridges refurbishment scheme

The work included the removal and reconstruction of a number of walls, concrete repairs to the bridge decks, replacement of bridge bearings, removal and reconstruction of parapet beams and safety fencing, and waterproofing and entire resurfacing of the gyratory carriageway and footpath.

And during the 18-month programme of work the gyratory was fully closed for safety reasons, although drivers were still able to join and leave the M5 via the slip roads.

Mark Fox, National Highways' Interim Regional Director, said:

We're very proud of our work here in the South West and it's

pleasing to be recognised by the Institute by being shortlisted in this year's awards.

The A38 Mowhay bridge widening scheme will enhance the lives of communities using this bridge over the A38. We're committed to improving safety across our road network, and the new and improved bridge will make it much easier and safer for a variety of users, including cyclists, travelling to and from the centre of Plymouth.

The M5 Junction 11 bridges scheme was a truly complex operation and despite Covid restrictions earlier in the project, and some challenging weather conditions over the last 18 months, the scheme has been managed fantastically start to finish by both ourselves and our supply chain who ensured we have finished on schedule.

The awards will take place in Bristol on 15 September and voting for the People's Choice award closes on 29 July. [Find out more information on the awards.](#)

For information on all National Highways' works in the South West people can [visit our website.](#)

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the National Highways customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the National Highways press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

PM call with Prime Minister Jonas Støre: 11 July 2022

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Støre.



Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to Prime Minister Jonas Støre today, following the Norwegian leader's recent visit to Ukraine.

The pair discussed the latest situation in the country, and how both Norway and the UK could continue to support President Zelenskyy's Government through diplomatic and military means.

The Prime Minister thanked Prime Minister Støre for his continued support to Ukraine and its allies, including Norway's recent £840m commitment to the country, and the leaders agreed on the importance of the international community remaining steadfast in their commitment to Ukraine. Ukraine was unable to negotiate a peace deal while Russia was still attacking it, the Prime Minister said.

Discussing energy security, the leaders recognised the public concern at rising prices, and agreed on the need for continued progress to low carbon solutions to shore up supplies.

The leaders agreed to stay in close touch in the coming weeks.

Published 11 July 2022

[Preferred candidate for new Pensions Ombudsman announced](#)

Press release

Dominic Harris is the preferred candidate for the role of Pensions Ombudsman and Pensions Protection Fund Ombudsman, the DWP has announced today, 11 July 2022.



The appointment is subject to a pre-appointment hearing by the Work and Pensions Select Committee, which will take place on Wednesday 13th July 2022.

Harris is currently a Partner in the Pensions Team at law firm CMS. He also serves as Chair of the Investment and Defined Contribution Committee of the Association of Pension Lawyers.

The Pensions Ombudsman Service is an independent organisation set up by law to investigate complaints about pension administration. It is a Tribunal non-departmental public body of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

The role of Pensions Ombudsman is a public appointment made by the Secretary of State for the Department for Work and Pensions. The appointment process has been an open competition regulated by The Office for the Commissioner of Public Appointments.

Additional information

- The Pension Ombudsman is a full-time role and the Ombudsman is entitled to an annual remuneration of £143,095, which is uprated annually.

Media enquiries for this press release – 0115 965 8781

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Published 11 July 2022

Last updated 11 July 2022 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 11 July 2022

First published.

156 organisations awarded for their

support towards the Armed Forces community

Representing the highest badge of honour, the Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Awards identifies businesses that employ and support those who serve, veterans and their families.

A total of 156 organisations have been recognised this year, the ninth year of the awards scheme.

Of the winners, 44% are either micro-organisations or small and medium sized enterprises, while 33% are public organisations. This demonstrates both the growth in numbers and the depth of supportive employers.

Councils, charities, blue light services, retail and insurance companies are among those that have been recognised.

Minister for Defence People Leo Docherty said:

Regardless of size, location or sector, employing members of the Armed Forces community is good for businesses.

These awards recognise the outstanding support for our Armed Forces from employers across the UK and I would like to thank and congratulate each and every one.

The Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Awards continues to grow in strength each year, with a current total of 643 holders. Organisations must reapply after five years in order to retain their Gold Award status.

To win an award from the Ministry of Defence, organisations must show that they provide 10 extra paid days leave for reservists and have supportive HR policies in place for veterans, reserves, Cadet Force adult volunteers and spouses and partners of those serving in the Armed Forces.

They must also advocate the benefits of supporting those within the Armed Forces community, by encouraging others to sign the Armed Forces Covenant and engage in the Employer Recognition Scheme.

Among those recognised include Morgan Stanley, IBM, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, Admiral Group and Groundwork.

Head of People at Admiral Group Rhian Langham said:

We're thrilled to be recognised with the prestigious Employer

Recognition Scheme Gold Award. Inclusivity is a key part of our culture at Admiral, and we're proud to create an environment where everyone feels supported.

Our colleagues with Armed Forces connections have such a positive impact on our business, particularly through their impressive resilience and adaptability, and we're committed to continue giving them the support they need.

Executive Director at Groundwork Greater Manchester Mike Ormond said:

Groundwork Greater Manchester are extremely proud and delighted to receive an Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award from the Ministry of Defence. Our work with the Armed Forces Community, especially supporting veterans to gain new skills and employment, has become a cornerstone of the trust's activity and this award is a reflection of the amazing outcomes and advocacy services our Veteran's Employment Team deliver.

We are also fully committed as an organisation to supporting the Armed Forces veterans and reservists who are employed at Groundwork as we recognise the breadth of transferable skills, knowledge and experience they bring to the company as well as the service they have given to our country.

New Chief People Officer and Chief Digital Officer appointed

Following full external recruitment campaigns, the Prime Minister has approved the appointment of a new Government Chief People Officer and a new Government Chief Digital Officer.

Fiona Ryland will be the new Government Chief People Officer, joining the Civil Service from University College London where she has been Vice President Operations / Chief Operating Officer.

Mike Potter will be the new Government Chief Digital Officer, joining the Civil Service from Thames Water where he was most recently interim Executive Director, Digital Transformation & Group CIO.

Both will join in Autumn 2022 and will help accelerate the delivery of key reform ambitions across the Civil Service.

Cabinet Office Minister Heather Wheeler said:

After a full external search, it's great to see the Civil Service attracting such high calibre leaders to help sharpen our focus on delivering for the British public.

Building a more skilled and efficient Civil Service is a key priority, supported by innovative use of the best technology available – and Fiona and Mike will be at the heart of that work.

Alex Chisholm, Civil Service Chief Operating Officer and Permanent Secretary for the Cabinet Office said:

I am looking forward to welcoming Fiona and Mike to their new roles, both of which are at the centre of our current Civil Service transformation.

As the new Government Chief People Officer, Fiona will be leading our HR function at a time of huge change, as we work in partnership with Ministers to equip our people to deliver Civil Service reform. Setting the standard on people issues across the Civil Service is a tremendous opportunity to focus on skills and professionalisation.

As the new Government Chief Digital Officer, Mike will be harnessing the unprecedented opportunities for digital technologies and data across the Civil Service, strengthening UK Government delivery both immediately and in the years to come.

I look forward to working with them both as we continue to reshape the Civil Service to meet our future challenges head on.

Fiona Ryland, Government Chief People Officer, said:

It is a real privilege to join the Civil Service in this role. I am looking forward to supporting the tremendous work that our teams deliver for people across the UK.

Mike Potter, Government Chief Digital Officer said:

It's an honour and a privilege to take on the role of Government CDO and I'm delighted to be returning to public service at such an important time.

I'm looking forward to working with colleagues across the civil service to continue to grow the digital skills we need for the future and deliver the roadmap for digital and data.